

TRANSCRIPT OF AUDIOTAPED PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Eastern San Diego County RMP Public Scoping Meeting
September 8, 2004
El Centro, California

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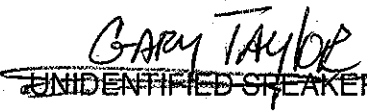
9 MS. ELSER: My name is Lynette Elser. Right now, our office does
10 not have a field manager. So several different people are rotating (unintelligible). So I'm
11 the associate field manager, so I'm doing what normally a field manager would do (unintel-
12 ligible).

13 I want to thank you for attending. We're just (unintelligible) plan for
14 Eastern San Diego. We have not updated the plan since 1981. And it's one of those
15 plans that's really important to us. And we wanted to make sure that when we do update it
16 that we include the (unintelligible) public.

17 We're going to be looking at the wilderness areas. You cannot
18 change (unintelligible) wilderness areas. You can't change whether they're there or not
19 there. But we can change their management to certain levels (unintelligible). We would
20 like to know what things you're interested in (unintelligible). We have threatened and
21 endangered species. We have not yet designated (unintelligible).

22 We'll also be (unintelligible) and water problems. And all of the
23 resource issues that we typically would look at with an environmental assessment (unintel-
24 ligible). We (unintelligible) what things you would like us to consider when we upgrade this
25 plan. And we will be writing resource management objectives.

1 We have not updated the resource management objectives since
2 1981. So we do want to know what objectives you would like us to consider when we
3 upgrade this plan. We are accepting public comments (unintelligible). You can mail us
4 comments at our office, or you can email comments to me. And it's really important that
5 we hear what the public wants so that (unintelligible). (Unintelligible), and he will continue
6 after me.

7 
~~UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER~~: I'd like to welcome you here tonight,
8 and thank you for coming out. The reason for this meeting is to invite you to help us to
9 determine the scope of the issues to be addressed and identify significant issues related to
10 the Easter San Diego Resource Management Area. This plan is over 20 years old and is
11 in desperate need of updating. So when we complete this process, the new plan that
12 we're just starting on now will completely replace the old plan.

13 We're in the first phase of the NEPA process now, which is called
14 scoping. It's where we receive your comments. And we'll integrate these comments into
15 the — into a draft resource management plan that is to be written here in the very near
16 future. We will request comments on the draft, and then we'll incorporate these comments
17 also into the final resource management plan. And then the last phase of the NEPA
18 process is after the plan is released, there's a thirty-day period for participants to issue a
19 protest. And then after all the protests are resolved, we will then issue a decision on the
20 plan.

21 So remember the main purpose of this meeting is to gather informa-
22 tion on interests — on issues that interest you, and that you're a key part of this process.
23 We are the keepers of public land. You're the public. We're here to make sure that every-
24 body is equally represented. And if you'd like to make specific comments on any of the
25 updates you'd like to see in the plan, we're here to listen to those. So please, I thank you

1 again for coming, and we look forward to your comments

2 MR. FRINK: Let's get a little housekeeping out of the way. We have
3 some ground rules for speaking, and they're up over here where you can see them. And
4 we'll walk through those to make sure that everybody's clear on that. Just as sort of a
5 preface here, this meeting is being recorded. It will be transcribed. And I assume that the
6 transcription notes will be available upon request. These mikes are very sensitive. If you
7 are having side conversations in the audience, be forewarned that your comments might
8 wind up recorded.

9 The panel is here to listen to your comments. And they are not
10 going to answer questions directly at this time, with the possible exception of procedural
11 questions. And I'll touch on those at the end. The speakers are to address the panel.
12 There is a five-minute time limit. And at the four minute and thirty second mark, I will wave
13 a yellow flag in the air so that you know you're approaching your limit. Please respect the
14 comments of others, also their point of view. The time that you have to speak is not
15 transferable. Keep your comments towards the issues, not towards individuals or groups.

16 If you would like to speak tonight, please fill out a green card. You
17 can get those at the back of the room there. Hold it up, and someone from the BLM will
18 pick it up. If there's enough time after everyone has had an opportunity to speak, we'll
19 take a short break. And you'll have the opportunity to speak again. If you need informa-
20 tion such as mailing addresses or how the planning process works, those are procedural
21 questions, and we will respond to those today. But as far as addressing issues, questions,
22 and things along those lines, that should be taken care of at another opportunity. If there
23 are no further questions, we can proceed.

24 MS. ELSER: Has anybody turned in the speaker card? No? Does
25 anybody wish to speak?

1 family does too. But I will ask that you continue with vigilance to continue the same job,
2 the same thing that you're doing, and to try to make a considerate — or consider all of
3 those that are using the land as you do. I, as a double taxpayer, and my children would
4 expect no less. And I hope that you would expect no less from us in terms of our inputs
5 and our support when it comes down to the — to — I don't want to say the pushing and
6 the shoving — but when we go and identify the objectives that we have to complete here
7 in the next few years. So thank you again.

8 MR. DEUTSCHIE: My name is Craig Deutsche. I belong to several
9 environmental groups. But I don't represent them. I speak as an individual. I'm rather
10 new at this, so I'm not sure if my comments are appropriate or not. My particular concern
11 is ORV use. And so I guess, my request is that in the planning process — in the planning
12 process itself, the designated routes be identified clearly, a plan for marking them, signing
13 them, be made clearly. If possible, some plan concerning enforcement of it be done. My
14 belief is that if this is done carefully in advance, then a great deal of the agony that would
15 come later can be avoided. And by planning it well in advance, there can be comments
16 and perhaps a resolution in advance rather than the acrimonious conflicts that have been
17 a history in the El Centro District in the past. Thank you very much.

18 MS. ELSER: Is there anyone else that would like to speak? I will
19 ask both of the speakers that have already spoken if you would like to have another turn to
20 speak. And if you did, there was one issue that we are really concerned about how to
21 approach in this plan. And I will give you a little bit of background, because we really do
22 want public input.

23 Because we haven't designated the routes of travel in Eastern San
24 Diego yet, that is a major part of this plan. And I know that both of you are interested in
25 that. When we designated the routes of travel in the WECO area, initially, before we did

1 scoping, we were going to pretty much follow what we had done in the 1997 EA. But
2 scoping comments led us to instead redirect ourselves and to look what was done in the
3 1980 route inventories and some of the mapping that we had from 1980. And from looking
4 at that, we used that as a base of which routes should be open or closed or limited. I
5 know route proliferation was of great concern.

6 In preparing to start working on the Eastern San Diego Plan, we've
7 had a survey crew out surveying actually what's on the ground in Eastern San Diego. And
8 they have about two more weeks of surveying before they'll be able to have a total inven-
9 tory, but they've made great progress so far.

10 But in doing the route designations, we're not really sure right now if
11 we should tear off of the 1997 EA or if we should go back to the 1980 maps or exactly
12 what the public wants. So if either of you wanted to speak again, or if you had any opin-
13 ions about that, we are very interested in knowing what direction the public would like us to
14 take.

15 MR. DEUTSCHE: Craig Deutsche speaking again. I am not familiar
16 with either the 1997 or the previous EA so I can't comment on that. I don't know if it's
17 appropriate to publish a preliminary -- a preliminary listing of designated routes that can
18 be commented on by the public. Today, I was in the Yuha and driving some of the limited
19 use routes. And I had to wonder why on earth was this ever -- was this ever considered a
20 route in the first place. I can't find it. And so I don't know if it is appropriate to publish a
21 preliminary list of designated routes and then allow a month or so for off-road people and
22 environmental people to look at it and make specific comments. That's probably not the
23 usual procedure, but it might -- it might be a way to resolve difficulties before they arose.
24 And so that -- that's a proposal.

25 MS. ELSER: Does anybody else want to comment? Okay.

1 MR. CUFF: Again, my name is Mike Cuff. I'm with AMA District 38
2 San Diego Off-Road Coalition and the Sidewinders Motor sports out of Ocotillo. In re-
3 sponse to the direction you're asking, I would request that you identify all of those routes
4 of travel as far back as you can go, whether it's the 1980's or earlier. And the reason for
5 that is because as the gentleman stated here, he didn't know if it was appropriate or not. I
6 feel that it is appropriate. We need to develop a history. We need to know where we've
7 been, where we are, and where we're going. And we can't do that without proper docu-
8 mentation.

9 As evidenced in the Yuha, having spent many years on the Yuha
10 riding and walking and all those kind of things, up until a couple of years ago, I didn't know
11 how much use there actually was in the Yuha. And I will — I'll somewhat disagree with
12 you in terms of how the trails are marked over in Yuha, having been there and worked with
13 WECO and that group over there. I felt — I feel that the markings are more — are more
14 than helpful. I think it's a matter of being able to determine which route is which. I will
15 agree with that part of it. But I do believe that they are well marked and from Point A to
16 Point B and knowing the Yuha the way that I do.

17 I would suggest that you keep us, the public, informed. I know that I
18 have my email address on a comment form. And I can go and forward that to ORBA, the
19 Off-road Business Association. I will have — I know that they will have a very large inter-
20 est in this — San Diego Off-road Coalition, AMA, of course, any other off-road organiza-
21 tions that are within San Diego and Imperial Counties as far as Riverside and the other
22 land users. I just feel though — I just feel as though that the more we get out on the table,
23 the more comment we would get. And I do believe that the hostile environment is over
24 from a few years ago. And I think that things are working, at least in my experience, a lot
25 better and a lot more workable. And it's actually turning into a two-way street.

1 So again, I appreciate that opportunity for the public comment. And
2 I would — I would go and request that we identify all of those routes of travel as far back
3 as we can. Probably if there was a way to put them in layman's terms, I know that be-
4 tween Mr. Meeks and myself — recently, I just learned what a UTM was, you know. So, I
5 mean, if we go and look at mapping with using lat long, most people understand that. But
6 in terms of a UTM, there's only a few of us that do now. So — and I would just ask that
7 you just use all of those resources that you have. My guess is San Diego County probably
8 has some men put on this also, as far as the county goes and their mapping system. So I
9 would just ask that you use all those resources available. Thank you.

10 MS. ELSER: Does anyone else have any comments? Thank you
11 for coming to the meeting. And if you think of any other comments that you would like to
12 submit, please feel free to write them. You can mail them to us, or you can email them to
13 us. The shut — close off date is October 12th. And if you mail them, we have to receive
14 them by October 22nd. Thank you very much for coming.

15 MR. FRINK: Mr. Deutsche, could you spell your name for us, please.

16 MR. DEUTSCHE: (Unintelligible). D-e-u-t-s-c-h-e.

17 MS. ELSER: And this meeting and the meeting tomorrow night in
18 San Diego will have the transcripts printed. And we will be posting them on the Internet as
19 soon as they're available. That concludes our meeting. Thank you.

20 END OF PROCEEDINGS

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TRANSCRIBER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Sara E. Gillespie, a transcriptionist, do hereby certify that the foregoing pages comprise a full, true and correct transcription of the proceedings had and the testimony taken at the tape-recorded Joint Management Committee Meeting in the hereinbefore-entitled matter of September 8, 2004.

Dated this 30th day of September, at Riverside, California.

Sara E. Gillespie, transcriptionist